

VZCZCXYZ0000
PP RUEHWEB

DE RUEHUP #0180/01 0651419
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 061419Z MAR 09
FM AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3958
INFO RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RHEHAAA/NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUDAPEST 000180

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR S/WCI FOR S COUGHLIN AND JVIBUL-JULES,
EUR/ERA WLUCAS, EUR/CE JAMIE LAMORE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/04/2019
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [PGOV](#) [EUN](#) [HU](#)
SUBJECT: HUNGARY REQUESTS ADDITIONAL GUANTANAMO DETAINEE
INFORMATION

REF: A. BUDAPEST 129
[1](#)B. MARTINSON-COUGHLIN EMAILS

Classified By: A/POL/ECON Counselor, Jon Martinson, reason 1.4(b,d)

[1](#)1. (U) This is an action request. See paragraph 7.

[1](#)2. (C) SUMMARY. MFA Senior State Secretary Marta Fekzsi told the Ambassador March 3 that the Hungarian Government continues to move forward on accepting a small number of Guantanamo detainees. Although ruling out accepting Uighurs due to growing economic relations with China and pressure from the Chinese Embassy, Fekszsi requested additional information on seven of the 23 originally provided detainee dossiers to allow the Hungarian Security Services to review and make recommendations. Fekszsi, noting the opposition Fidesz party's objections to accepting detainees, said that this is not an easy decision for Hungary. Although Fidesz leadership told the Ambassador they vowed to remain publicly silent on the issue, Fidesz President Viktor Orban, in a letter to the Ambassador, asked the USG to withdraw the request. However, Karoly Banai, the Prime Minister's Security and Foreign Policy Advisor told the Ambassador on March 6 that the Prime Minister appears to be more willing to say yes than no, if Parliament's National Security and Foreign Affairs Committees vote to support. End Summary.

[1](#)3. (C) In a meeting with the Ambassador March 3, MFA Senior State Secretary Marta Fekszsi stated that the MFA has reviewed the previously provided 23 detainee summaries and now requests detailed dossiers on the following seven detainees: the four Uzbeks, the Palestinian, the Egyptian, and the Somali. Fekszsi stated that the GOH would not consider accepting any Uighurs, underscoring the growing economic relationship with China. She noted that the Chinese Embassy had already "put the topic on the table, and thanked us" for the decision.

[1](#)4. (C) Continuing, Fekszsi said that she would hand over the seven summary files to Minister Szilvasy, Head of the National Security Service, to examine and identify those detainees who would potentially be eligible for transfer. She commented that the review would focus on potential transferees who would be able to communicate in either English or Russian, and who would request to come to Hungary. Fekszsi outlined the following steps needed before the GOH would move to a decision: access to the complete files on the seven detainees identified above; a USG funded trip for one each representative from the MFA, National Security Service, and Immigration Authority in order to conduct detainee interviews at Guantanamo; a negotiation session in Washington, D.C. immediately after the Guantanamo visit; agreement as to the type of travel documents to be issued to

detainees; and an exchange of diplomatic notes. Feksz, commenting that four EU States appear ready to accept detainees, said that the MFA directed their Ambassadors in Lisbon, Dublin, Paris and Madrid to discuss a possible joint announcement to accept detainees if the GOH decided to accept detainees.

15. (C) Focusing on the political implications, Feksz told the Ambassador that the Prime Minister met with her, the Foreign Policy Advisor Karoly Banai, and Justice Minister Tibor Draskovics on February 28 to discuss the detainee issue. The Prime Minister emphasized that he would need the concurrence of the National Security Committee, the Foreign Affairs Committee as well as acceptance by the Socialist and Fidesz leadership before making a final commitment. Stating that "this is not an easy decision for Hungary," Feksz noted that the opposition Fidesz party as well as some members of the ruling Socialist Party oppose accepting any detainees. (Comment. Fidesz MP Zsolt Nemeth told the Ambassador March 4 that Fidesz would not support a five-party agreement on the detainee question, but they "would remain publicly silent" on the issue. However, in a letter to the Ambassador March 5, Fidesz President Viktor Orban asked that the USG withdraw the request to accept former detainees, citing the growing number of violent crimes in the country with the minority Roma population and the inability of the government to adequately protect people's security. End Comment.) Feksz also stressed working within the EU framework on the issue, highlighting the importance of the upcoming EU Commission visit to Washington on March 16.

16. (C) In a meeting with the Prime Minister's Security and Foreign Affairs Advisor Karoly Banai on March 6, the

Ambassador raised the issue of political opposition to detainee acceptance, not only from Fidesz, but perhaps more so from the Socialists. The Ambassador stressed that the decision belongs to the GOH, and while "we would be happy if you get to yes" there are several potential negative internal political and security aspects to be carefully considered before accepting detainees. Acknowledging that he was informed two days ago of Fidesz's opposition - and agreement to remain silent - Banai said that only Socialist MP Attila Mesterhazy was vocally objecting. Banai said that the Prime Minister mandated an assessment of the issue and stated his belief that the Prime Minister will be more willing to say yes rather than no. Banai stated that, at a minimum, the Foreign Affairs and National Security Committees would have to be briefed and vote on a positive decision, and his greater concern is with Fidesz. Posing some questions for thought, Banai asked will they keep their commitment to remain publicly silent on the issue during the committee hearings? What would they do if they regained the government leadership, either in early elections this year, or in 2010. They could find themselves on the opposite side of an already-agreed-to U.S./Hungarian agreement.

17. (C) Action request. Post requests the Department's assistance to provide the requested dossiers on the seven detainees as soon as possible as well as guidance in response to the GOH's requested travel to Guantanamo.
Foley